

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 02112 171227Z

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SUBJ: ARABS, ISRAELIS DISCUSS MIDDLE EAST AT AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST
CONGRESS

1. VIENNA SOCIALIST PAPER "ARBEITER ZEITUNG" HAS REPORTED
EXPRESSION OF VIEWS ON MIDDLE EAST BY ISRAELI DELEGATE AND
ARAB OBSERVERS AT AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (SPO) CONGRESS
AS TRIUMPH FOR CHANCELLOR KREISKY, "WHO BROUGHT THEM TO A
SINGLE TABLE." EXPRESSION OF VIEWS OCCURRED MARCH 11 AT
SPECIAL "INTERNATIONAL EVENING," CHAIRED BY KREISKY,
IN WHICH FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS FROM SIXTEEN
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 02112 171227Z

FOREIGN COUNTRIES TOOK PART. GATHERING OCCURRED IN SMALL

HALL FOLLOWING ALL-DAY SESSION OF CONGRESS. IT WAS ATTENDED BY ONLY ABOUT ONE HUNDRED SOCIALISTS, WHICH WAS INDICATIVE OF KREISKY'S CAREFUL ORCHESTRATION OF EVEN. EXCEPT FOR STATEMENTS BY ALGERIAN AND SYRIAN, COMMENTS OF PARTICIPANTS WERE MODERATE AND THUS, AS ONE DELEGATE INADVERTENTLY MENTIONED, IN ACCORD WITH REQUEST OF KREISKY IN HIS LETTERS OF INVITATION TO BE NON-CONTROVERSIAL. AMONG THOSE PARTICIPATING WERE FORMER ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER ABBA EBAN AND OBSERVERS FROM FIVE ARAB COUNTRIES: ALGERIA (ABDELKRIM GHREIEB), EGYPT (PROFESSOR DR. ABDEL A.G. EL DIN, RAFIK HASSAN), MOROCCO (ABDERRHIM BOUABID, ABDERRHAM YOUSOUFI), SYRIA (DR. FAWAZ SAYARH, NABIL SHRETEH), AND TUNISIA (ORHAN KOLOGLU).

2. IN OPENING COMMENTS, KREISKY STATED THAT MIDDLE EAST AND OTHER (SPAIN, CHILE) CONTROVERSIAL INTERNATIONAL SUBJECTS WERE AT LAST TO BE DISCUSSED UNDER ONE ROOF BY PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED. HE SAID EUROPEAN MEMBER PARTIES OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOULD TRY IN FUTURE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH OTHER SOCIALIST-ORIENTED PARTIES ELSEWHERE BUT INTENSITY OF SUCH RELATIONS WOULD DEPEND UPON TIME AND OTHER (UNSPECIFIED) DEVELOPMENTS.

3. ALL ARAB SPEAKERS DEMANDED COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967, FULL RECOGNITION OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF HOMELESS PALESTINIANS, AND RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE IN THEIR OWN NATIONAL STATE. EGYPTIAN, MOROCCAN AND TUNISIAN TOOK MODERATE LINE, HOWEVER, WHILE ALGERIAN AND SYRIAN ATTACKED ISRAEL AND U.S. SHARPLY. EGYPT'S ABDEL EL DIN SAID, "WE WANT PEACE BECAUSE WE NEED IT. THE MOMENTUM TOWARD PEACE MUST NOT BE DAMPENED BUT THE NEXT STEP ON THE WAY MUST AIM AT AN OVERALL STEELEMENT." MOROCCO'S BOUABID DECLARED THAT FINAL OBJECTIVE MUST BE COEXISTENCE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARABS.

4. EBAN SAID THAT IF ARABS SOUGHT A PALESINE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 VIENNA 02112 171227Z

PLACE OF ISRAEL, ISRAEL'S ANSWER WAS NO; IF THEY SOUGHT A PALESTINE SIDE-BY-SIDE AND TOGETHER WITH ISRAEL, ANSWER WAS YES. HE SAID ISRAEL WOULD WITHDRAW FROM TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967 WHEN PEACE WAS ACHIEVED AND EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AS PART OF MIDDLE EAST WAS RECOGNIZED.

5. COMMENT: WHILE THERE WAS NO REAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

OR DISCUSSION, GATHERING DID SERVE ARAB INTERESTS BY
PROVIDING USEFUL FORUM TO PUT FORWARD ARAB VIEWS ON
MIDDLE EAST ISSUES TO SELECT GROUP OF AUSTRIAN
SOCIALISTS INVOLVED OR INTERESTED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
IN ADDITION, MEETING CLEARLY BOOSTED KREISKY'S
PRESTIGE AS STATESMAN AND STATUS AS "SPECIAL FRIEND
OF ARAB WORLD." STRIDENT ATTACKS ON ISRAEL AND U.S.
BY ALGERIAN AND SYRIAN OBSERVERS UNDERCUT MODERATE
STANCE OF OTHER ARABS AND SEEMED TO REENFORCE
CONCILIATORY IMPRESSION CREATED BY ABBA EBAN'S
PRESENTATION OF ISRAELI CASE.BUCHANAN

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